

S O M E
CONSIDERATIONS

On the Establishment of the

French Strolers;

The Behaviour of their

BULLY-CHAMPIONS,

And other Seasonable Matters, at this Critical
Juncture. Humbly addressed to the Publick
in general; but, particularly, to the Inhabi-
tants of *Westminster*.

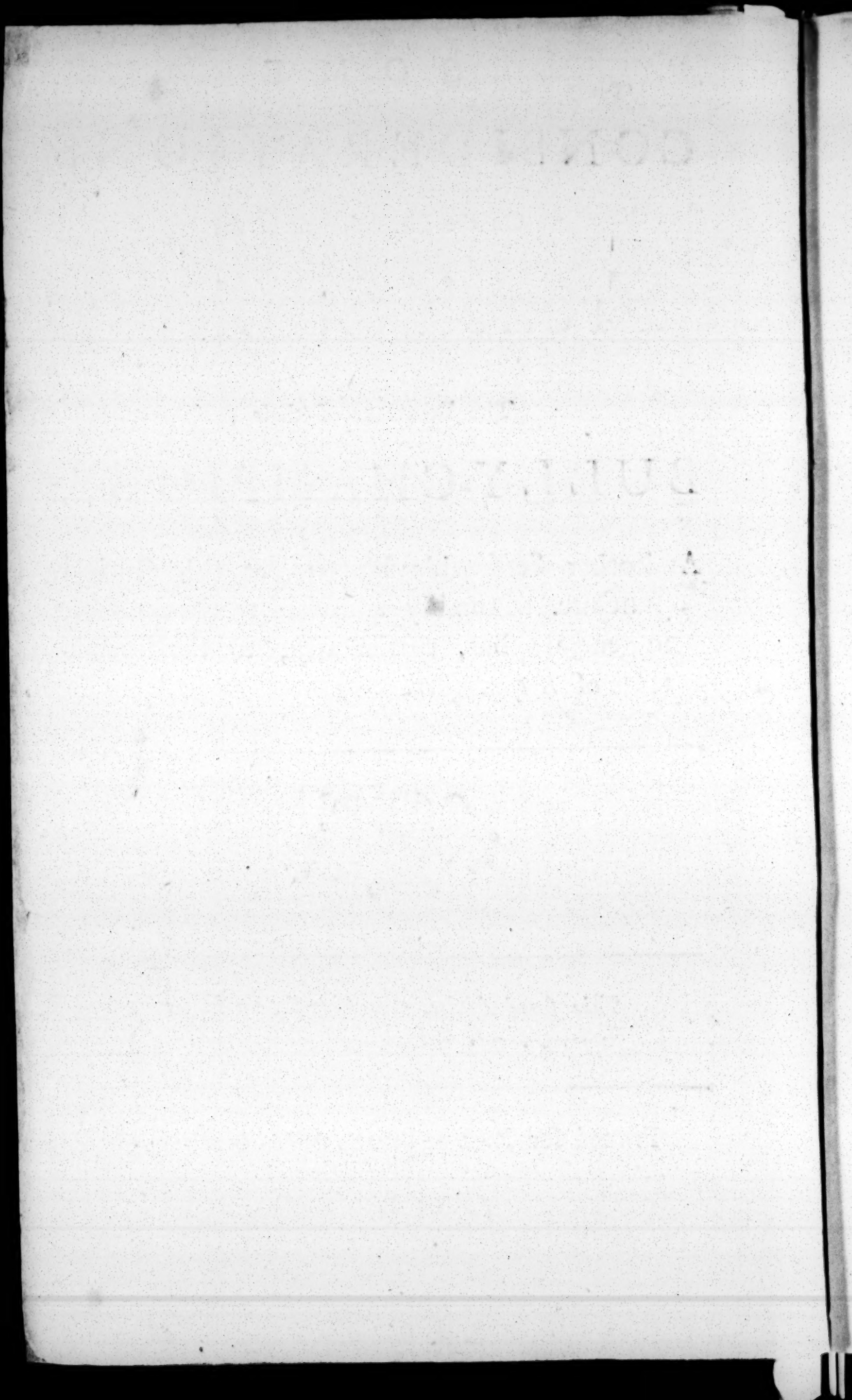


*Take sound Advice, proceeding from a Heart
Sincerely yours, and free from fraudulent Art.*

Printed for R. FREEMAN, near St. Paul's.

(Price Six Pence)

1749.



SOME

CONSIDERATIONS

On the ESTABLISHMENT of the
FRENCH STROLERS, &c.

My dear Countrymen,

I Am (as *Othello* observes) declining in the Vale of Years; and have, for some Time, through the Debility of Age, been a peaceful and useless Spectator to the World: And what to term this Spirit that has now stir'd me up to the Composition of this humble Offering, I shall leave to your Decision. Nevertheless I am very conscious that it is neither personal Interest, nor a Perverseness of Spirit. No, my Countrymen, it is a restless Course of Reflection! It is a burning Zeal for my poor insulted and abused Country! Which, like the last exulted Flash of an almost spent-out Taper, glances with but a momentary Glean, and then expires. It will probably be the last I repent of this kind, that my almost worn out Life may ever trouble you with: And as I am not prompted to this Attempt by any sinister View, I shall, as well as I can, endeavour to address you, without any further Circumlocution, in the plain Fashion of a free and honest *Englishman*.

When I was first informed that the worthy Bidders and Supporters of these insolent *French Vagabonds*, as they are termed by the Laws of our Country, though otherwise esteemed by our Nobility and Guardians, had modestly and judiciously applied to the *'s

Ch——n for a Licence in their Behalf; I own, I was so far from giving the least Credit to it, notwithstanding my Intelligence seemed to have very good Authority, that I could not but treat it as the most unwarrantable Jest. But now I find, to our eternal Shame and Reproach, that Time the old infalible Convicter of all Doubts, hath too apparently evinced the Truth of it: And indeed, the Nature of this Proceedure, the Consequence of it, the general Construction, and the Clamour and Amazement it hath caused, together with my own Concern for the Honour and Interest of my Country, hath so potently wrought upon me, that I cannot now avoid exposing to the Publick some Considerations and Remarks, perhaps not altogether unworthy of their Notice.

When the Capacity for Public Business, and the active Part of Life is pass'd, the wearied Sage being tired and almost spent with the Fatigue of his pondrous Burthen, and long Journey, gladly sits down in the Evening of his Days, to cherish weak Nature with Rest and Reflection. The Scene is then changed, or at least ought to be, from Folly, Pastime, and Pranks, to serious Conversation and solid Contemplation. In such a peaceful and cogitative Mood as this, was I engaged a few Days ago, reading and reflecting upon the unfortunate Case of *Bosavern Penlez*, who has been since executed, for that criminal, but laudable Attempt of suppressing public Stews, the certain Nursery and School for all kinds of Vice and Villany, when a Gentleman, a Relation of mine, entered my Appartment, and with a disatisfied Appearance in his Countenance, and the *Westminster Journal* in his Hand; he addressed me thus;

Here Sir, I have brought you something to amuse you, which although I know it will not be very grateful to either your Eyes or Ears; yet, I am persuaded that it would hereafter give you more Displeasure to
find

find it had escaped your Notice. Here he read me the following Quotation; which, as *all* my Readers may not have seen, I have here presented it *verbatim*.

From the *Westminster Journal* dated
Saturday October 28, 1749.

* * I know nothing of the Subject of this Letter, except from the Letter itself: But I well remember how a Company of *French* Buffoons were once received by my Countrymen, who have no Reason, I apprehend, to be better reconciled now to the *French* or to bear an Insult on their Taste, than they were ten or twelve Years ago.

To B R I T O N S.

O my brave Countrymen!

HERE's rare News! fine News! very fine News indeed! The Town is in an Uproar about it. Joy Transport, Rage, Malice, and Resentment take their Flight, and sit self-reigning and triumphant on their respective Thrones in every Breast. Different Classes, according to Custom, maintain and encourage different Ideas, different Opinions, and different Views and Interests.

But can you guess, my Friends, at the Cause of this general Buz and Clamour? Why, could you think it? the true Patriots of *Britian*, to shew the World their Politeness, and the Superiority of their Taste and Understanding, have not only inscrib'd their kind Invitation and Consent, but also their Purses, to bring over, support and maintain a Parcel of half starv'd *French* Comedians; who are now landed, *alamode de France*, with servile Hypocrisy; gaudy Outfides; meagre Faces; impudent Airs; empty Pockets; and

d——n'd keen Stomachs to Snap the Bread out of poor Countrymen's Mouths, and cram it into their own.

Mere Imitators of the vilest Mimicry of the lowest Kind, of the most stupid Bunbust, and empty Buffoonry ! By their unwarrantable Appearance, we must behold the revered Ashes, Memory, and immortal Labours of our dear and illustrious Countrymen, *Shakespeare*, *Johnson*, *Dryden*, and all the vast Train of noble *British* Authors (whose Writings are Ornaments and Honours, as well as Mirours and everlasting Documents to our Country) insulted, ridiculed, slighted, and obliged to give Place to foreign Puppet shews, and Grimace. And all this, I say, to support and encourage a set of arrogant and insolent Raggamuffins, who will give themselves the Airs of a C---t L---d, though with meaner Spirits than the very Children of an *Irish* Journeyman Taylor.

Behold, O *Britons* ! the Effects and Fruits of a good and honourable P——? A Brace of Noble H——ges ! Sixty Thousand Pounds-worth of Superb F——w——! The Tricks of a *French* Sharper ! And the insolent Invasion of a compleat Set of *French* Fops, Rooks, and Starvings !

It is true, the Legislative Body of *Great Britain*, has impowered the K—g's C—n to grant or refuse a License at his Pleasure, for any kind of dramatic Performance within the Liberty of *Westminster*, exclusive of those Patents already granted, and especially guaranteed by that Act of Parliament. Now, as it is no secret to the best Judges of those excellent and entertaining Performances, how difficult it is to attain the Summit of that most pleasing Art ; I would here remind them of the many ineffectual Attempts which have been made, by the most promising Genius's of our own Country ;

Country ; and which really wanted such a Place as this, which those *French*—Worthies have now obtained to School and train them proper for the Theatres Royal. Which would have been a Means of proving and qualifying many ingenious Persons for the last mentioned Places, as well as encouraging their Merit and Industry, and giving them Bread.

How deficient their most powerful and assiduous Applications have ever proved, the Town are sufficiently apprized. But then, shall we applaud such injurious Partiality ; and the Indignity thus undeservedly offered to our aspiring Countrymen ? Shall they be absolutely refused the Benefit and Pleasure of this License, and suffer it to be granted to a rapacious Crew of *French Mockers* ? who notwithstanding the Form of Peacemaking, ever *were*, and ever *will be*, inveterate Enemies to the present Constitution of *Great Britain* ?

It is reported too, that those worthy Persons, who were the Cause of their coming over, and who are ever foremost to prefer and encourage their own Country, have boldly asserted, that, as it is the Will and Pleasure of the N———ty of this Realm they should come over ; the Town will not, must not, dare not be so hardy as to interrupt their so much desired and warantable Performance. To which modest Assurance, my honest brave Countrymen ! I shall only now answer thus much for myself——That I am a freeborn *Englishman* ; and by the lawful Priveleges of my Birth and Country, I have more Right to disapprove, resent, or oppose any publick and foreign Affront, or Infringement upon the Liberties of my Fellow-subjects, than the most conceited, worthless, or ignoble Person of them all, has to support or defend them. Nor do I in the least doubt, but that, when those illustrious Exhibitions are first attempted, the ingenious *Messieurs* will meet

meet with an *bearty* and *gracious* Reception, as in the Opinion of all true *Britons* they may *justly deserve*. And towards which I will not only subscribe my Consent and Advice ; but will also render them my very utmost Interest, as well as my most strenuous Assistance, manual and vocal.

Yours, &c.

HUMPRY BRITISH.

The Vracity of this Author's Intelligence, my Readers may observe, by the Judicious Mr. *Touchit's* Introduction to the above Epistle, was by him a little doubted of : And, to say the Truth, when I heard it read, I was of the same Opinion : But about five o'Clock the same Evening, I began to stagger at it, occasioned by the following Queries in the *London Evening Post* of the 26th of both which Pieces, I shall not trouble my Reader with any Comments or Remarks, whatever, but leave him to do that Office for himself.

From the *London Evening Post*, dated
Thursday October 26.

The Subject of the French Players having almost engrossed the present Conversation of the Town, it is thought proper to submit the following Queries to the Consideration of the Publick.

Whether the *French*, by Way of Satisfaction for sending their last Company of *Mimical-Mendicants* back, in so unpolite a Manner, may not, by some secret Article in the late glorious Peace, have expressly stipulated for a free Settlement of one of their Stage Colonies in this Kingdom for the future ?

Whe-

Whether to remove any Uneasiness our Ministry may have expressed concerning *Fort St. George*, these Theatrical Heroes may not be sent as HOSTAGES for the *Bonne Foi* of their *Grand Monarque*?

Whether, if either be the Case, any Insult offered these *State-Strolers* may not induce our Neighbours to explain it into an Infraction of the Peace, and think themselves at Liberty to dispense with every other Article of it, so peculiarly negotiated for the *Glory*, as well as *Interest* of *Great Britain*?

Whether such a Measure might not be of fatal Consequence to two *Noble Youths*; who, regardless of all vulgar Notions of Honour, and greatly despising the Clamour of Popularity, have submitted to become Spectacles for our good Behaviour?

Whether, if sending *one* French Company hither, on the *Even* of a *War*, was an Insult on the Nation, it is not equally such to send *another* before the Completion of a Peace; and may it not a little puzzle Posterity to account for *English Hostages* being in a *French Court*, and *French Players* in an *English one*, at the same Point of Time?

Whether by some *lucky Cartel* we may not, for once, have over-reached the *French*, by obtaining this useless Body of our Seamen sent thither?

Whether we may not soon expect a like Troop of *Spanish Comedians* in Return of our Manufacturers, lately exported into that Kingdom?

Whether if a Body of *English Officers* should appear in Support of the Theatrical State, it would not
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meet with an *bearty* and *gracious* Reception, as in the Opinion of all true *Britons* they may *justly deserve*. And towards which I will not only subscribe my Consent and Advice ; but will also render them my very utmost Interest, as well as my most strenuous Assistance, manual and vocal.

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Whether if a Body of *English Officers* should appear arm'd in Support of the Theatrical State, it would not
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look like Dragooning us into *French Interest*, and might not be deemed *enlisting in Foreign Service*?

Whether the Legislature did not a few Years since think it necessary to limit the Number of Playhouses, altho' the private Fortune of one of our own Countrymen was sacrificed to that Regulation?

Whether licenſing thoſe *French Vagabonds* is not directly oppoſing the Senſe of the Legislature, enriching the Foreigner on the Spoils of a Native; and may not, in a literal Senſe of the Words, be deemed *Ludere cum Sacris*?

I apprehend that I have made uſe of thoſe Pieces here with the ſame View, as the Authors of them had by their Exhibition in the public Papers; namely, to thereby open the Eyes of the Public, that they may the eaſier and clearer ſee and judge of what is to follow; I own the Sight of them very much alarmed me, but the Succeſſion of Facts which thoſe two Pieces forewarn'd us of, I muſt confeſs hath multiply'd it by thouſands. But I muſt here take notice, that it hath been the Opinion of our Contempory-Speculiſts (or, at leaſt, thoſe who pretend to be ſo) that, within this laſt Century, the Seasons and the Climate of *Old England*, ſeem abſolutely changed; but whether for the better or the worſe, they have not been very forward to determine; and therefore, we will ſuppoſe the latter, becauſe if this Aſſertion can be proved true, it pleads a moſt weighty Excuse for the late Miſcarriages and Miſmanagement of moſt of our Public Affairs; for it is not to be reconciled by all the known Rules of Philoſophy, that where the very Climate and the Seasons are faulty and degenerate, the Inhabitants (being alſo but *Elementary Beings*) ſhould ever be expected to either continue the ſame, or change for the better; by which
reaſon-

reasonable Supposition, I am bound, by the Charity of both my Nature and Religion, rather to lay the Blame of their Proceedings upon this palpable Defect of Nature, than on any Ignorance, Neglect, or malignant Design of my worthy and honourable Countrymen: And what may yet more strongly corroborate with this Axiom, is; that it has also been observed, to the no small Credit and Advantage of the *French* Nation, that, for these few Years past we have had more South-East Winds in *England* considerably than formerly, and which must consequently impregnate and infect the Natives (by their Inspiration of this Gallic-Air) with Notions and Inclinations absolutely *French*; and to which I may still add, that, if these approved and fashionable Winds should continue still to blow, it will be no Wonder, in a few Years time, if those Heros should make a most severe Réprisal upon us, for all the Indignities and Inconveniencies they have heretofore suffered from the Behaviour of our Forefathers. The Battles of *Cressy*, *Poitiers*, *Agincourt*, *Blaregnies*, *Blenheim*, *Oudinarde*, *Ramillies*, &c. &c. &c. will doubtless be remember'd, and but to our Disadvantage; and, for my own Part, I must confess, that the reading over of these Histories do but fill me with very unpleasant Agitations and Reflections; for when I bring to my Thoughts the Actions and Behaviour of our renown'd Forefathers (both as Patriots and Soldiers) I am almost of Opinion, that, could it have been possible those Illustrious Great Men, who had thus immortalised their Swords and Memories in their Country's Cause, had they seen their depraved and most degenerate Successors in this paltry *French* Party, wearing their Sovereign's honourable Livery; and being so lately recalled from a just and necessary W——, to taste the Indulgence of a shameful and lazy P——; like pitiful and ungrateful Upstarts, in Defence of the meanest and most scandalous Invaders of the Law, Liberties, and Dignity of their own Country,

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try,

ry, to draw their Coward-Swords, in such a Cause, upon a few of their defenceless and unarmed Fellow Subjects (who had so lately supported them through the Course of that W——, and had, likewise so effectually assisted them, both with their Treasure, and all other laudable Methods, in a dangerous and detestible Rebellion; and who were now but shewing their just and honest Abhorrence of the Insult offered them, by those who wrought the Rebellion) I say could our Illustrious Fore-fathers, but have seen those M—— Mungrels, Behaviour in that honourable Place of Battle, they would, certainly, I should think, have corrected their unmanly Insolence, with that severe Treatment, which they most highly deserved.

It is past all Doubt, or Contradiction, that those who express their Dislike of this foreign Infringement were no *Jacobite* Friends, no Tools, or Emissaries to foreign Interest. And therefore, consequently most Loyal and most honest Friends and Subjects to his Majesty King GEORGE, and the present Constitution: And by which Argument, the adverse Party, smells damnably rank of the contrary. But however, as I am now upon the Place of Action, I don't think it very improper, as I am voluntarily engaged on this ungrateful Subject, to open the full Scene to my Readers and trace it a little methodically. To begin then:

It seems, there is a special Act of Parliament to limit and restrain the Number of Play-houses within the Provinces of *London*, and *Westminster*. And this Act I am informed, was made at the Instigation of the C—y of L——n; who remonstrated to the Legislative Body the Inconveniencies of suffering more of those public Exhibitions, than were really authorized by *Patents-royal*, and which *Patents* had been purchased by their Proprietors at a very high Expence. The first

first Person that felt the most sensible Inconveniency by this necessary Restriction was Mr. G—ff—d; who thinking himself a little hardly dealt by (as the Place he occupied was diametrically opposite to the Situation of both the other Houses) he therefore submitted his Case to the Consideration of the Honourable H— of C——s. But that judicious Body, justly knowing that the private Interest of any one Man, ought to give Way to the general Advantages of his Country, they found it impracticable to redress him, and the Act passed, without the least Partiality in his Behalf. However, it seems there was a Clause admitted in this Act which impowers the C—— of his * * *’s H—d to authorize a Company, at his Pleasure, to P---y in the Liberty of W——r. And according to my above Author, in the *Westminster Journal*, many Applications by our *English* Actors have been made for the Benefit of this Indulgence, without Success. If then his G— had sufficient Reason (as doubtless he had) to give our Countrymen these Denials: I want to be informed, what Reason can be assigned that is sufficient for this Indulgence to the so late Enemies (and I believe at Present, no great Friends) to our illustrious King and Country? Was it understood in this Act that all Foreigners were to be excepted? Or, was it stipulated in our late T——y of P— that they should have a R—m—t of F—t G—ds to support their Illegality? It was indeed set forth, that there were some private Articles in that T—y. (Perhaps not very proper to appear in Public) and we may suppose that this may be one of them. But however, I would advise our *English* Actors, who are likely to suffer by this Encroachment, to apply without Loss of Time to the Ministers and *Noblesse* of *France*, for the like Subscription, and M—rt—Support for their Performance in *Paris*: And likewise, for the strongest Recommendation from all those Men of Honour who are now endea-

vouring with all their Power, that they may starve in their own Country. But to proceed,

When the Report of those People's Arrival, Profession, and Protection had gained a general and established Credit, Many People of both Sexes who were hearty in the Cause of their King and Country, began to make Enquiry into the Legality and Truth of this Allowance, many of them bearing but very little Faith that such an Innovation would be suffered by our noble and wise Executors of the Laws, which we consequently look upon as the Guardians of our Liberties. But what could we say, when it was confidently affirmed that our C—G—I had most boldly and worthily declared, that he would defend and protect them with his very utmost Interest — (And which, I must needs say, I have heard intimated, is not a little upon the Decline) And by what hath happened on the Nights they have hitherto played, it pretty plainly appears that he has kept his Word. But I demand what Appellation is justly and strictly due to a Set of Men who wear the *s Cloth, and at the same time make indignant War upon his peaceful and defenceless Subjects ; threatening, wounding, and putting them in the utmost Fear and Danger of their Lives ; and who, at the same time, do cheerfully subscribe to their unmerited Support and Maintenance?

May it be doubted, that when these shocking Abuses come to crave a satisfactory Reparation in any of his Majesty's Courts of Judicature, that the truly worthy, upright, and humane Judges of these Courts (for which we are at this Time remarkably happy) will withhold their wonted Justice from fulfilling their Deserts? I say, is it to be thought that such dangerous and shocking Proceedings may pass through these Courts unpunished? Many People, I am jealous, will treat this Affair as a
 Thing

Thing of very light Consequence ; but for my Part, I look upon those M---rt---l Insolents, with no other Similitude than as a M-n-ft---l Banditti of Bullies, which, from the Success of this President, we may suppose, are to be call'd to Arms against his Majesty's best Subjects, on the Occasion of every stupid and unwarrantable Frolick. However, let my Heroes take this Piece of Advice from an old Man : It is no trifling Matter to prosecute a Provocation to an abused and incensed People ; and the slower they are to Anger, the heavier will the Blow fall when it comes. Generosity may brook Ingratitude sometime with Contempt ; but it will never suffer the Wretch to continue his Insults beyond Extremity, without rendering him at last that Chastisement which he justly deserves.

But what amazes me most, in this shallow Proceeding, is, that a certain Gentleman, who at that Instant represented an opulent C---n in P---t, should so exert his Courage against his very Friends to whom he was obliged for that Honour. But, however, as he is now appointed an Officer in a Benefit P---ce, which absolutely puts him to the Necessity of being either Richose, or remaining Deficient of his late S---t, we are in great Hopes, that upon this Occasion, they will not very readily forget his Valour and Conduct : And for my own Part, I declare, that had he been a Son of mine, and I had found him guilty of such an Indiscretion, I would have dealt him such a Chastisement as his Ignorance well deserves : I would have turn'd up his Tail to a Rod ; and after a sufficient Visit there paid, I would have sent him, like a great Boy as he is, blubbering to School again.

But now, Gentlemen, (the worthy Electors of the City and Liberty of *Westminster*, I particularly speak to) with your Permission, in order to examine
this

this Affair a little nearer, I would beg Leave, in my Turn, to offer you the following *Queries*.

First, Is it to be expected that this truly-honourable, and worthy Gentleman (should he be re-chosē) will behave himself with more Wisdom, Conduct, and Honesty in the H—— of C——s, or at the Ad—— B——d, than he has now done in this Respect towards himself, his El——rs, and his whole Country?

Secondly, Is it apparent, that this Gentleman's private F——ne can afford and support the vast Expence of an opposed El——n?

Thirdly, (if the Second Query should be answered negatively) Whether we may not suppose that your own Money, after passing through certain Offices, was not before, and is not again, now, employ'd for this good Service?

Fourthly, If the bringing in of one of these C—— C——tes cost the Ex——r so many thousand Pounds, as appears by the R-p——t of the S——t C——e of the last P——t, what may it cost the Nation to purchase so great a C——t M——ty in that H——as they now have?

Fifthly, If these C——t M——rs are brought into P—— by M——l Influence, and the Public Money, are they not more properly the R-pr-fnt-tives of those M——rs than of the P——ces they sit for?

Sixthly, Is it to be expected that while there is a M——l M——ty in the H—— of C—— that they will ever pass one A——t to check those Evils?

Seventhly,

Seventhly, If the public T——re be thus exh—ted to purchase M——l Bonds and Fetters for the enslaved Subjects of our own Country, is it any longer a Wonder that we are so burden'd with a N——l D—t and our Fl——ts, &c. remain unpaid?

Eighthly, Is it not the Pusilanimous and Avaricious Part of Mankind that thus sell themselves and their Country, by chusing such an Instrument to R---pr---t them?

Ninthly, Is the above Gentleman (who is so worthily preferred to execute this weighty T--st) so appointed for his Wisdom, Honesty, Penetration, and Experience?

Tenthly, Should his Opponent be fairly El——d by a vast M——ty of legal Votes, are we absolutely certain that he will be return'd?

Eleventhly and Lastly, Shall this Gentleman, who hath R-pr-f-t-d you, and dangerously aff-cted you at the same Instant that he was begging your future Favours, succeed in his present Request?—If he does, I must own, in my Opinion, he is then your proper R-pr-f-t-t-ve: ——— And so, Gentlemen, submitting the above Questions to your own Judgments to answer, I beg Leave to return to the F——b-P---y-H----e.

In the first Place, let us now enquire a little into the Legality of this Undertaking and Proceeding: I have the Honour of being intimately acquainted with a Gentleman who is a very eminent and learned Council at Law; and in a Conference we held on this Topic, he assured me that he had several Times both read and consider'd this Act of Parliament against a third Play-house; and also affirm'd, that in his Opinion, it was

in the Power of his Majesty's J-----ces of the P---ce for the City and Liberty of *Westminster*, to send these *French* Strolers to a Place of C---n, as V-----ds; even in Despight of all those illustrious and desperate Hero's, who either already have, or hereafter may, take up Arms in their glorious and worthy Defence.

Nam quid Legis sine Moribus? — Perhaps, if they were to do it, in this Case, their C-mm---ns might be taken from them.—O poor *England*! when the M---rs of J---e are afraid to execute J---ce, what have we not to dread from the Consequence? St— M---rs, now-a-days, are not the Instruments of their R—l M---rs Will; but subtle Tyrants, and despotic Abusers of their M---r's Power. Is it consonant to Reason, that this Affair has ever been represented to his M— in a true and proper Light? I apprehend that they have imposed upon him, in as gross a Manner, as they do every Day upon us: And since I am enter'd upon this extraordinary Affair, which has most deservedly made a very great Noise in the Town, I will endeavour to trace it to the very worst Consequence which can accrue from it (in order to forewarn them of the Danger and Evil on each Side the Question) since it may yet happen, if what is publicly threatened, should be put in Execution; that is to say, an utimate Trial at Skill for it, in order (since they are dared to it) if possible, to repel Force with Force.

Suppose then, *this should be* the Result; and any Person, of either Side of the Question, should chance to lose his Life by it: Are not the Promoters of this unwarrantable Proceeding the fundamental Cause of that Murder? And may not the Consequence of that Person's Murder be of more Weight and Loss, not only to his own Family, but even to the Public in general, than those *French* Mockers are ever likely to bring to
any

any Part of this Nation? Suppose, on the one Side, either my L—— T———m, His G—— of H——, the M—— of G——, or L—— P—— should fall a Sacrifice to this Outrage; or, on the other Side, T——ddy-D——ll, the G——ng——rb——d Merchant; — the Bl——d *Irishman*; M——d——m St——kes, the Boxing L——dy; or, any other such Person: Should we not then, have an *equal* and general Cause to lament the Loss of any one of those worthy and useful Subjects? The very Thought of such a fatal Catastrophe hath almost brought Tears into my Eyes.

But, suppose there should be ten or twenty kill'd, or even maim'd in this Undertaking, what shall we say then? Why, that it will answer the End of *French* Government; which is ever, if possible, to set *Us* at Variance with ourselves, that by our retrograde Follies, we may weaken our own Strength, and fall a Sacrifice to their delighted and inhuman Policy. — *If Satan be divided against himself, how shall his Kingdom stand?*

But I will now advance one Step farther, and make an applicable Reflection on the late Effect of Rioting. It is not above three Weeks ago, since *Bosavern Penlez*, a poor unhappy Youth (whose Fate is generally regretted) suffered a most shameful Death for the Action of Rioting. And in which Action we have a recent Experience of the Fury of an incensed Mob. And who that has read the Account of the Colliers Proceeding this last Summer at *Bristol*, can be otherwise than shock'd at our present Apprehensions? The just Resentment of the Populace for the Cruelty of *Bird*, the Keeper of St. *Martin's* Round-house; when even the Interposition of the Guards were no Impediment to their Revenge; and their similar Behaviour at the Imposition of the Bottle-Conjuror; are all very

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lively Instances of the Power and Danger of an irritated People, vulgarly called a Mob. One Man hath already lost his Life, by a public Execution, for the Offence of unlawful Rioting; and Numbers of others, as yet remain in Prison, untry'd, for the same Crime, in the West of *England*. These are very shocking *Mementos* to Reflect on. But if any of these have merited irrevocable Death, what shall we say of those who provoke such Issues? What can be said of such unworthy Men, who make a Merit of drawing their unprovoked Swords on their defenseless Fellow Subjects, for only *Breathing* in Behalf of their invaded Rights and Liberties? — I would ask, by what Title shall we honour those Gentlemen? Shall we call them Wise, Brave, Honourable or Honest? Or, — *Aufe Versie*.

But I think, Gentlemen, in strict speaking, this may be called Rioting; and if so, who are the Rioters? Why, let us without Partiality, a little examine the Case, and that will soon instruct us. To begin then;

It is very well known, that it hath always been a Custom at Theatrical Performances for the Audience to shew their Approbation and Applause by Silence and Clapping. And their Dislike, by Whistling with what they generally term a Cat-call, Hissing, and such like. And by these means, the Managers and Actors understand the general Opinion of their Audience: And consequently, whether to drop their Performance; or pursue it. Now here is a Theatre opened, and a Company of Comedians (whether lawfully, or not, shall not be our present Question) publicly exhibit a Play. The Performance is no sooner begun, but I discover something in it that I dislike; upon which I fall a Hissing, (and which I imagine I have a Right to do, if I please, because I can assign a very good Reason for it)

it) but in an Instant after, I shall have half a Dozen Naked Swords at my Breast, and with the vilest Oaths and Imprecations, threatening me with immediate Death if I once dare to repeat it. And the *like* Behaviour is at the same Time administer'd by vast Numbers of others, who come arm'd with this Intent, upon all those who are of my Inclining.

Pray, Gentlemen; (to the Public I speak, Lawyers, and others) is this Law, or Equity? Is Hissing at a Playhouse, Legally a Crime equal to Treason, Murder, and any Capital Felony, that I am to lose my Life for it? And must I be instantly sacrificed by a Crew of unlawful Executioners; without the least Chance of a Tryal for my Life? Pray, what is this but Tyranny! Usurpation! and Rebellion! To wage such cruel and unequal War against their Fellow Subjects, and the King's Peace and Dignity both in despite of, and contrary to ALL LAWS, both human and divine?

Now this is exactly the present Case; and if any thing upon Earth can be called Rioting, I think this is: And in a much more shocking Degree, than any thing that has happened in *London* these many Years. And, moreover, this I know, that if any Man had a loaded Pistol in his Pocket, and finding himself thus attacked, was to shoot one of these Swaggerers dead upon the Spot, it could absolutely be found no otherwise in Law, than *je d'fendendo*. And which was not the same Termination as formerly.

But here is another Point, which I cannot, nor ought I, by any means, to pass it over in Silence. To support this unwarrantable and unparrelled Proceeding, it seems, (I don't know what to term them properly, but *Heros* I have called them, and so *Heros* let them be) I say then, it seems these *Heros*, to support their Undertaking

dertaking, fill'd this Playhouse with Officers and Soldiers, giving peremptory and articulate Command to the latter, that if any Body should dare to interrupt this darling, exquisite Performance, they should immediately run them thro' the Body with their Bayonets; and in so doing they would bear them harmless. This, I believe, was a Promise like most other Court-Promises; for I cannot find out, how a Man, who commits a willful Murder can be made out harmless. Suppose these Soldiers should obey this Command, and really thrust any Person through the Body, is it not the same thing as tho' they were, by Command, to fire upon them? Is not the Effect the same? And the Illegality of it the same? Where is the Difference to me, whether I am run thro' the Body, or shot thro' the Body? If I die by it, I am murdered either way; and it can be proved no less, any way. Nor is there any *English* Law, that I know of, capable of Impowering any Officer or Magistrate, whatsoever, to give such a fatal Command against the King's peaceful Subjects. But, to shew the contrary, this I very well remember, that about fourteen or fifteen Years ago, one Captain *Porteus* having the Command of a Party of Soldiers, who were ordered to attend an Execution at *Edinburgh*, when the Populous not behaving according to his Honour's Liking, he ordered the Soldiers to fire upon them which they immediately did; and the Consequence was this, That he was brought to a Trial for it; and, by the Laws of his Country, was condemned to be hang'd. But, having some good Friends at Court, her late M——y Q——n C——ne, being then sole R——t, was so gracious as to grant him a Reprieve. And which Gracious Action was so resented by the Populous (as the Crime for which he was condemned was committed against themselves) that they took him, by Force, out of the Prison, and hanged him up in the public Street, even in Despite of the Q——n's

Q——n's R——l Grace. And I am apt to believe, that this would be pretty near the Case with *those* wise Commanders, if the Soldiers should be silly enough to to obey them, And this is another strong Instance of the ill Consequence of provoking the public by *Male-Treatment*. But I have a Thought just come into my Head, that I must own pleases me: Methinks now, I see and hear the chiefest of these Heros, who is reported to have encouraged these noble Exploits, speaking the following Speech, which seems to suit him extremely well, thus alter'd from *Shakespeare's Othello*:

Soft you; a Word or two before you go.
 I have done the State some Service, and they know't,
 — (For which I am well paid). — No more of that.
 I pray you in your Letters,
 When you shall these unlucky Deeds relate,
 Speak of me as I am: Nothing extenuate,
 Nor set down aught in Malice.
 Then shall you speak
 Of one who acts, — not wisely, — but too hot!
 Of one, not easily persuaded, but being wrought,
 Will push it to the Extream!
 Of one, who (like the ungrateful Serpent)
 Will strike and sting the Breast that cherish'd him!
 Of one, whose piercing Eyes
 (Are so much used to the fiery Mood)
 Dart Threats as thick as th' *Arabian* Clime their fatal
 (Basilisks!

Set you down this:
 And say, besides, that in *Sc—tl—d* once,
 Where a Bonnetted and Ambitious Sir,
 Threaten'd the C——n, and seduc'd the North,
 I, wou'd have took by the Throat the presumptuous
 Dog,
 And kick'd him *thus*. [*Kicks the next Person to him.*
 But

But, to conclude, if we should make any farther Enquiry into the Cause of this unnatural Proceeding (I mean concerning the Encouragement of the *French Strolers*) and my afore-mentioned Reasons should be thought deficient, *viz.* the Alteration of the Climate, and the frequent South-East Winds ; I know not how otherwise to account for it, but by laying the Foundation of this affecting Crime upon the *P—e-Makers* at *A—— la Ch——lle*, by their stipulating of that drowsy Article of Ob——n. For this stupid Ingredient of Forgetfulness being forced down our Throats, whether we would or no ; it occurs to me to have been the main Cause of this pernicious Attempt. For may we not reasonably suppose, that by their initiating of this Article, it was understood by the Parties agreeing, that it should be either Treason, Felony, or Murder, or some such dangerous Incurrance, for *Us* to recal to our busy Memory, that *France* was an implacable Enemy to the Freedom, Religion, and present Constitution of those Realms ? That she had sworn to impose a bigotted Popish Pretender upon the Throne of *England* ; and that she would never cease her Endeavours, 'till it was accomplished ? That Protestants, even of their own Country, ever *were*, and daily *are* persecuted by them ? That the late War, which involved all *Europe* into an intemperate and bloody Ferment, was begun and maintained by the restless Ambition of *France* ? And I must here observe too, it was very evident, that this Ar——le of Obl——n, was a very well compounded one ; for to me it is pretty clear, that it took an immediate Effect upon all those Persons, who at that Time enforced it. Had it been otherwise, I should think, that the Faculty of Forgetfulness could have been but of little Use to the *St—tes* of either Party ; so long as we are yet suffer'd the Possession of Histories, Chronicles, and Records.

There,

Therefore, it appears to me, very expedient, that these Obl-n-Makers should at the same time have gone one Step further, and totally extirpated all those above Antidotes of Obl—n, in order to render their Work fully compleat. For it is very Apparent, that so long as we can, upon all Occasions, apply ourselves to Books for a sufficient replenishing of our retentive Desires, that Art-cle could be of no Effect ; and the continual Burden of remembering those Grievances abovemention'd, must certainly be much more painful to us than pleasant : And though we are, by the abovementioned Opiatic-Act, obliged to forget all former Parts and Kinds of Male-Treatment from the *French*, to the Signing that Treaty ; yet, I don't apprehend, that we are absolutely obliged to forget all the Abuses, Encroachments, &c. that either already have happened, or hereafter may, since that Time.

But, before I quite take leave of my Reader, I think it my Duty here to remark the commendable Behaviour of the Right Worthy, as well as Right H-n---ble the L—d M——r of the C—y of L——n, on the Exhibition of those *French* Stroler's Theatrical Bills, who (truly *Englishman*-like) was pleased to declare, that, if they should dare (after being properly advised of it) to stick up any of their unwarrantable Bills within the Gates of the C——ty, they should receive such Punishment as their indignant Insolence justly deserved. This was a Proceeding truly worthy of so illustrious and powerful a Magistrate, as well as becoming a noble, honest, *English* Patriot ; and I must own, that I think the above Behaviour of his L--dsh-p ought to put all our *Fr--ch*-bully L--ds quite out of Countenance. But, upon this Reflection, I humbly beg their Pardon ; I apprehend, that honest conscious Shame, is no Part of their Natural Property. But as this is the first Day of the *W——r* El——n, I trust that every
honest,

honest, worthy El——r will now exert himself to support the true Friends of his Country, and the Suppression of every Foreign Invasion.

P.S. Pray Gentlemen be pleased to take Notice of the following Advertisement.

Whereas it has been maliciously reported, in Order to impose upon the worthy Inhabitants of the City and Liberty of *Westminster*, and to prejudice me in their Favour at this Time, that I was active at the *French* Play-house last Tuesday Night. I do declare upon my Honour, that I was neither in the Pit or the Gallery where the Disturbance happened, during the Time of Performance, or drew my Sword, or made use of any Weapon, either to strike or terrify any of the Spectators: Nor was I even present at the first and chief Disturbance, &c.

The above Advertisement a little examined and desected.

In the first Place, it is a very malicious Report indeed, for People to declare what they both saw and heard. But pray, which Way are those worthy People imposed upon most; by either believing their own Eyes and Ears, or by the equivocating Words of one who (in my Opinion) is neither to be believed nor trusted?

Please to observe these Words in the above Advertisement.—— ‘ And to prejudice me in their Favour at this Time; that I was active in the Disturbance at the *French* Play-house last Tuesday Night; ‘ I do declare upon my Honour’ ——(which is indeed no very great Pledge)—— ‘ that I was neither in the ‘ Pit or Gallery where the Disturbance happened, during the Time of the Performance; or drew my
“ Sword.

“ Sword, or made use of any Weapon, either to
 “ strike or terrify any of the Spectators; nor was I
 “ even present at the first and chief Disturbance.”—
 But I am wrong informed, if my L—Ch—J—ce may
 not soon find sufficient Testimony to the contrary. In
 the next Place, since that Gentleman’s Honour is now
 staked (which, by G—! I would not lend him Six-
 pence upon) I would demand of him (by that sacred
 Token) whether he is not a laudable Subscriber to these
French-Strolers?

But the Word *Honour* is now become so frequently
 pledged, and so often forfeited, that very few People
 of common Sense chuse to lend a Groat upon it; ex-
 cept it is to those, who are much more careful not to
 abuse it. Not a P—wnbr—ker in Town will give it
 Warehouse Room.

The Sum Total of all this is, that if the above Gen-
 tleman was guilty of drawing his Sword, swaggering,
 and threatening his Friends the first Night at the *French*
 Play-house, it does not at all clear up his Conduct or
 Innocence, that he did not repeat it the second and
 third. However, it is certain he was there the first,
 second, and third Nights; and if I am rightly inform-
 ed, he *there* spoke more in Defence of these *French*
 V—nts, then he ever did in the H—of C— for the
 Service of his own Country. And so,

He who bath Eyes to see, let him see.

And with this Hint, I bid you heartily Farewell.

Ne dicas tibi non prædictum.

F I N I S.

